



**Social solidarity collaborative action for equality in education and poverty reduction post conflict and disaster in Aceh, Indonesia**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Education is a road map of the nation's development, conveying the value of society and the purpose of the nation, where both formulas are invested in curricula. Poverty is a real challenge for education development, and it can be considered a direct result of collective leadership failure in the provision of both quality education and welfare support. This study examines a social collaborative action served by the community to provide an equal education for vulnerable children, a part of a solidarity coping strategy for poverty reduction. The samples of this qualitative approach study are social workers from Yayasan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Aceh (Yakesma/Aceh Welfare Foundation), who initiates a social collaborative action, involving society, educators, and other stakeholders in various role-play. This study proves that combined actions of social workers, educators, and society in providing equal education to children from lower-income families, beggars, and sexual violence, have given a significant impact on the children and families, giving more access the children to have proper education, formal and non-formal education, financial support through a foster parent program, and provides a role substitute of parents. This collaborative program has created a parthway to a poverty reduction in Aceh, Indonesia. A part of the institution's main goal to support the vulnerable children in Aceh.*

**Keywords:** Social-Solidarity; Equality in Education; Vulnerable-Hildren; Poverty-Reduction.

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## ABSTRAK

*Pendidikan merupakan peta jalan pembangunan bangsa, yang menyampaikan nilai-nilai masyarakat dan tujuan bangsa, dimana kedua rumusan tersebut ditanamkan dalam kurikulum. Kemiskinan merupakan tantangan nyata bagi pembangunan pendidikan, dan hal ini dapat dianggap sebagai akibat langsung dari kegagalan kepemimpinan kolektif dalam penyediaan pendidikan berkualitas dan dukungan kesejahteraan. Studi ini mengkaji aksi kolaboratif sosial yang dilakukan oleh masyarakat untuk memberikan pendidikan yang setara bagi anak-anak rentan, sebagai bagian dari strategi penanggulangan kemiskinan dalam solidaritas. Sampel penelitian dengan pendekatan kualitatif ini adalah pekerja sosial dari Yayasan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Aceh (Yakesma/Yayasan Sejahtera Aceh), yang menginisiasi aksi kolaboratif sosial yang melibatkan masyarakat, pendidik, dan pemangku kepentingan lainnya dalam berbagai permainan peran. Studi ini membuktikan bahwa gabungan tindakan pekerja sosial, pendidik, dan masyarakat dalam memberikan pendidikan yang setara kepada anak-anak dari keluarga berpenghasilan rendah, pengemis, dan kekerasan seksual, telah memberikan dampak yang signifikan terhadap anak dan keluarga, semakin besarnya akses anak terhadap pendidikan yang layak, pendidikan formal dan nonformal, dukungan finansial melalui program orang tua asuh, dan pemberian peran pengganti orang tua. Program kolaboratif ini telah menjadi bagian dari upaya pengentasan kemiskinan di Aceh, Indonesia.*

**Kata Kunci:** Solidaritas Sosial; Kesetaraan dalam Pendidikan; Anak-anak Rentan; Pengentasan Kemiskinan.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Aceh is the most western province of Indonesia, consisting of twenty-three subdistricts with a total population of around 53.71532 million (BPS, 2019). It is located at the tip of Sumatera Island, which has suffered from both tsunami and earthquake, and for thirty-two years of severe military conflict between the Free Aceh Movement and the Central Government of Indonesia. The disaster was the major motivation for peace diplomacy and lead to a peace agreement that was signed on August 2005. The long conflict was suspected as the result of an unsatisfied and unequal share of income between local people and the central government. Wormser (2012) identified Aceh as the best trade for gold pepper in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Aceh has also been well-known as one of the richest provinces with natural resources, gas, and oil; unfortunately, these wealthy natural resources have not given any meaningful change to the people's lifecycle, especially, in terms of the people's quality of life, which include income generating, education and health. Aceh is considered one of the provinces with higher rates of poverty.

Huge income discrepancy was believed to be the root of the conflict and a group of people, later named themselves as Free Aceh Movement struggled for independence. Though the conflict eventually ended peacefully, thirty –two years was a substantial number for the people's life story. Many children lost their parents, home, and access to education. On August 15, 2022, the Acehnese celebrated the 17<sup>th</sup> of the peace agreement, however, there is not much change, many people still struggle in getting a proper life, and children are

struggling to get access to education, where most leaders are busy with the political issue and focus more on “entertaining program” rather than to see the impact of the program to the community. CNN Indonesia reported that Aceh is still the poorest province on Sumatera Island (2022).

### *1.1. Education in Aceh*

Over the decades, Aceh had experienced a series of unpredictable situations. These situations have given a robust impact on the development of education in Aceh, providing both advantages and disadvantages to society. Tracing back to the whole period, the development of education in Aceh can be systematically divided into several phases:

#### *1.1.1. Aceh Sultanate Era (1607-1639)*

Aceh reached its golden time of the Sultanate era during Sultan Iskandar Muda, which officially ruled Aceh from 1607-1639. During its golden moment, Aceh led most of Sumatera Island and expanded its power crossing the ocean, from Pahang to Malacca. Aceh also led the military expedition against the Portuguese in Malacca. The historical manuscript also recorded that during the power of Sultan Iskandar Muda, Aceh was not only growing in the economy but also a role model for education development, which stressed Islamic teaching. Several famous Islamic scholars were introduced during the reign of Iskandar Muda eminent, such as Hamzah Fansuri. Hamzah Fansuri was a popular Sufi writer, who was born in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was believed as the first Sufi in the Malay language (Iskandar, 2011, in Feener, Daly & Reed).

Another famous name was Syekh Nuruddin Muhammad Ibnu ‘Ali Ibnu Hasanji Ibnu Muhammad Hamid Ar-Raniri al Quraisyi or famously known as Syekh Nuruddin Ar-Raniry, who later named as one of the biggest Islamic Universities in Aceh, Ar-raniry State Islamic University. Ar-raniry was a famous Islamic scholar, who wrote more than 26 Islamic books. He was great in Sufism, fikhs, hadist, historical issue, and religious comparative study. He played a key role in Aceh's historical monarchy, as an advisor, teacher, and Sufi (Feener, Daly & Reed, 2011).

Sri Ratu Tajul Alam Safiatuddin, a daughter of Sultan Iskandar Muda, was involved in education and she produced many books and became a foundation of law for education and economics during the sultanate era (Putra, 2015). She represented the female character in her era and was later recorded as one of the great female leaders in Aceh.

Dayah or traditional boarding school was introduced to cover education in Aceh. Two clerics from Persia, Amir Sa'id and Tajuddin, who worked for the sultanate of Pasai, (659/1260-913 /1507, as cited from Nur, 2019) established Dayah, as a traditional religious institute, to produce more clerics in Aceh. This idea was effective enough in transferring knowledge to the Acehnese, which also structured the educational system in Aceh. Dayah was the Islamic instrumental in the process of spreading Islam in Aceh. The existence of these Islamic scholars during the monarchy in Aceh, covering the law and administration system, trading, and education served as a model for other Islamic states, especially in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, after the death of the sultan, the Aceh Monarchy declined and Aceh was failure in producing another outstanding leader and scholar.

### *1.1.2. Dutch Colonial and Civil War (1873-1942)*

The Dutch war in Aceh was recorded as the heaviest time in the history of Aceh (Feener, 2011). This is also mentioned by A. Muzakir Walad (Ismail, 1977), former governor of the Special Province of Aceh, in his foreword for the book *Dutch Colonial War in Aceh*. The war lasted for forty years and resulted in many casualties on both sides. During this long war, the people of Aceh not only died due to the war but infectious diseases, such as cholera and malaria.

In the history of the Aceh war, a strong Islamic faith embraced by the major population in Aceh was led by the Muslim scholar (Ulama) who had produced an effective management policy during the war in Aceh. Under the control of Ulama, the people in Aceh were united to fight over the Dutch colonial which had caused a long-tired war for both sides. This religious (jihad) spirit was narrated in the Acehnese story of holy war (hikayat prang sabi) ‘whoever is killed in battle died a holy death’ (Ismail, 1977). Hikayat Perang Sabil or hikayat prang sabi (story of holy war) in the Acehnese language, has been preserved to be introduced to the young generation, which tells the people how great the ulama served the *ummah*, to fight for freedom during the Dutch aggression. In the modern form, this hikayat can be considered a storytelling format, to teach history to the children.

A strong social structure built from the religious value within Acehnese underpinned the resistance against the Dutch colony, and Christian Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) was dispatched to disguise himself as the Muslim and destruct the relationship between the *ulama* (religious leader) and *ulebalang* (elite group in Aceh). Though Bakker (2009) said that the “resistance” idea introduced by many scholars from Indonesia during the Dutch war was not treated from the Islamic point of view, the fact that this “resistance” during the war was strongly influenced by the “Jihad” value from the Islamic point of view. Clear proof had been shown from Hugron's idea to learn Islam and be a part of this Muslim society, and he even performed hajj to convince the Acehnese that he was a real Muslim. A new policy, without a proper introduction, was established and the *Uleebalang* (*elite in Aceh*) took control over power, and they were allowed to have education from Dutch schools, where the *Ulama* and *Dayah* were discriminated from the power system. Unequal education access had caused massive destruction to the educational system in Aceh. This unequal education support to the young people caused a massive illiterate within Aceh society later in history (Amiruddin, 1994, as cited by Roche, 2012).

### *1.1.3. Rebellion*

Education was listed as the rebels' target as part of spreading the rebel's ideology to the society. This was considered the most effective way to attract the people's attention and gained more support from local society. The process of taking down the state education system included the burning of the school building and other support systems, as well as the intimidation and killing of teachers (Schulze in Reid, 2006). The Javanese teachers were mostly targeted in any aggression, which resulted in a major exodus and left the school behind. This had given a huge impact on some schools, especially vocational schools. Schulze (2006) released data between 1998 and 2002, which identified at least 60 teachers were killed, and 200 others were physically assaulted. 170 were predicted seriously injured or tortured and many others were believed kidnapped. Other data also showed that at the beginning of 1989

and June 2002, 527 schools, 89 officials' houses for teachers, and 33 principal houses were burnt down. This suggested data might only cover a small percentage of the real data; however, it should have been able to describe the education realm during the rebellion era, which seriously affected the future of Aceh.

#### *1.1.4. Post-Conflict and Disaster (2004)*

It has been widely known that December 26, 2004, was the tsunami boxing day that devastated a major part of Aceh. A strong earthquake followed by the tsunami wave had broken down many buildings, and housing and even killed many people. In the educational realm, Aceh was forced to accept the fact that they lost many school buildings and all the support systems, including teachers, administration staff, and students. The tsunami survivors began to individually settle down in the early hours after the tsunami. Survival mosques were the major target for temporary housing before another temporary house was built after the disaster. A few months later, schools were started from students' temporary tents, where volunteers presented themselves to help during this emergency stage. The aim of having the schools at that moment was to provide some activities for students, which was a part of the trauma healing process, and to switch the kids' attention from this huge tragedy. The pupils' mates at the school were not all from their original school, but whoever they met at the barrack or temporary tents. It took some time till the students were back in their original school area, and other years of the waiting list to get to the school building. "For once, a catastrophe seems to have brought positive changes to Aceh. It has helped promote solidarity among people which has long suffered under conflict" (Alfiatunnur in Aquino, 2007), leading to a peace agreement signed in 2005.

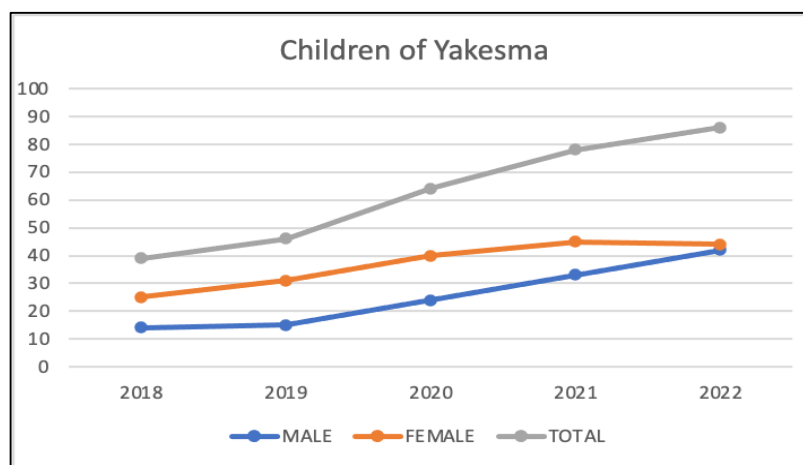
Unfortunately, the post-conflict and disaster, which ended with a peace agreement in 2005, does not guarantee the entire level of community in Aceh has a proper education. This might be caused by the family background, who have never earned any education and leave in poverty for a long time. Their failures to provide education to their children have a strong connection with their background, and some of them might also be ignorant due to their financial status. Social solidarity collaboration is a solution that emerged from the bottom, the raising idea from the society, in responding to the issue; especially, children and education. The former rector of Syiahkuala University, Prof. Dr. Ir. Samsul Rizal, M.Eg (Serambi Indonesia, 2021) reminded that the university entrance test result, might represent the quality of education, and in 2020, Aceh province had the TPS lower score, nationally (AcehTrend, 2020).

#### *1.2. Yayasan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat (Aceh Welfare Foundation)*

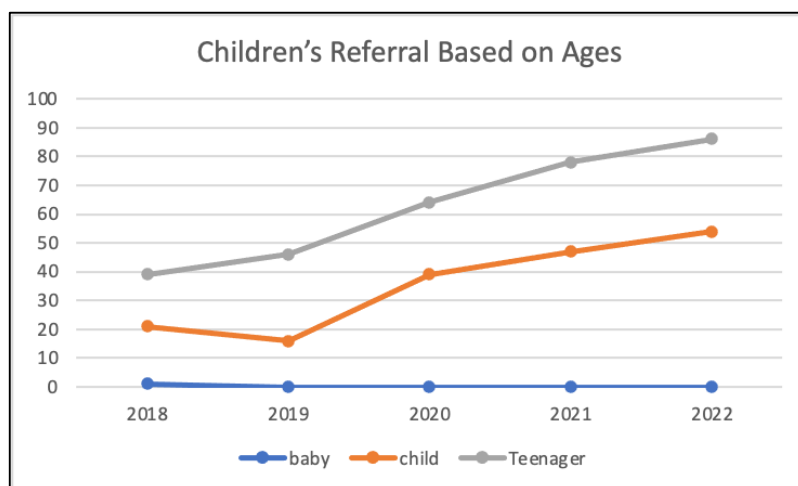
Yayasan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Aceh is a multifunction complex, comprising a series of social programs, such as the orphanage, formal and non-formal education. This compound was built post-disaster in 2004, as a shelter for tsunami survival children. This compound serves the children for free, starting from meals, education, and another support system. This orphanage was fully funded by an Australian organization, as the major donor, for the first five years of its function. The funding support ended five years later, and the foundation found difficulty in funding the orphanage. Moreover, the number of vulnerable children, who are referred to Yakesma has increased quite significant. It has also showed

diversity in backgrounds, such as orphaned children, sexual and family abused, beggars, and many more.

Faturochman and Fuadi (2011, as cited from Nashriyah, Alfiatunnur & Hermawan, 2021) highlighted series possible impact of sexual abused, such as “depression, phobia, nightmire, and long term mistrustful.” The referral children to Yakesma were mostly suffering from all the symptom mentioned above due to being sexually abused by their close relatives, due to the mother’s re-married or being used by their close relative to support their family’s income as beggars. Those children need shelter to stay and earn proper education. To continue its support, the foundation initiates a society collaborative program, which involves society in funding those vulnerable children. This social solidarity action was officially begun in 2015, and the major participations of funding support, were from society. The following chart represents the annual referral of children to Yakesma, collected from the last five years.



**Figure 1.** Referral children for the last five years. (Yakesma’s Bank Data 2022)



**Figure 2.** Children’s referral based on ages. (Yakesma’s Bank Data 2022)

These data do not include the children who are temporarily referred to Yakesma, for example, a temporary referral child from the local authority, due to the certain issue, those children stay for one to five months, waiting for the legal process, either returning them to the family where they belong (if they still have one), or assigning them to choose any place to stay, including to stay at Yakesma for their entire life.

This research aims to observe the power of this collaborative solidarity action in providing life balanced and equality in education for vulnerable children, leading to a leadership reform within policymakers, and expected to contribute in poverty reduction in Aceh, Indonesia. Bob Michael (1972; Becker, 1993) indicated that the “benefit of schooling is large.”

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. *Social Solidarity Collaborative Action*

Isadora Hare (2004) defined social work as “professional social work that promotes social change, problem-solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance wellbeing”. Social character, which was introduced by Erich Fromm, “is a kind of macro personality based on the emotional attitudes and values shared by people in a certain context” (Maccoby, 2007; Northouse, 2010). In the context of Aceh, the social change within the society has given a significant impact on the community, which challenge those from lower-level income family. A social solidarity collaborative idea emerged within the social worker from Yayasan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Aceh (Yakesma), a social foundation that used to provide a temporary shelter for the tsunami survival children. The new emerging phenomenon within society has attracted the attention of these social workers, where many children are begging on the street, and the data of abused children, either family abused, or sexually abused victims are reported increasing in number. Yakesma also receives more referrals from the local social department, the community, and even poor families, who have inadequate income to afford education. It was a strong justification in developing the idea of social solidarity collaboration to provide more opportunities for the children. Some of those children are also relocated to the orphanage, owned by Yakesma.

Initially, this solidarity program was only involved close relative of Yakesma’s volunteer; however, after a certain period, more people from various backgrounds are engaged to support these vulnerable children. This support is not limited to funding only, but also times spending, and any material needed by the children. “Work engagement is an active, positive, work-related state that includes three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Bonaiuto, Fantinelli, Milani, Cortini, Vitiello, Bonaiuto, 2021). Hardy (2022) mentioned that “...see futures through fragmented or solidarity lenses have created real interest in global perspectives...”. The today’s solidarity collaborative network is not only built through a collective group of people, who meet regularly at a certain place but it can be designed through an online platform. Berkani (2020) said that “social networks have been one of the most important topics in the last few years”. The online platform was officially introduced by Yakesma in 2020, due to the covid 19 pandemic.

The phenomena of getting social workers to take over certain issue within society, which should be considered as the government part of work, are not something new, it has been promoted in many countries in the world; however, the government, as the policymakers, should be able to accommodate the ground issue and widely open opportunities to collaborate with society to find solutions. In Aceh, social workers earned less financially, but contribute more to any issue they are involved in. Therefore, having all parties, in this case, social workers, society, and government, in *one framework* is believed to be a better solution to cope with all social issues. Social workers have a very flexible structure, direct

access to ground level, and are adaptive. Society is the people's power, which might contribute to any positive and negative changes, and the policy maker is both a national and community legal representative, who should be able to see the need and work for the change.

## 2.2. *Equal Education*

Indonesia regulation on National Education System, Law no 20-year 2003, chapter IV, part I article 5, point no 1 mentioned that “every citizen had an equal right to receive a good quality education. In addition, point no 3 pointed out that “citizens in the remote or less-developed areas and isolated areas have the right to receive education with special services”. In more detail, this regulation also describes the ages and the sustainability of education, which are mentioned in article 6, point 1 and 2, which are: (1) Every seven to fifteen years old citizen shall have the right to receive basic education, and (2) Every citizen shall have the obligation to keep the education process sustainable. Most of the kids who are referred to Yakesma, of them were at age 8-14, but they have never had any access to education, or they have begun, but terminated due to the distances, financial or social issues, such as being a victim, in the form of family or sex abused. Disability is also recorded among those referred children. The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) article 24 highlighted that “persons with disabilities should be guaranteed the right to inclusive education at all levels” (Gow, Mostert, & Dreyer, 2020). It is where Yakesma focuses on, providing a more reasonable and convenient atmosphere to all the children, through a holistic concept of education, regardless of their background.

## 2.3. *Poverty Reduction*

Fang and Zang (2021) suggested two parts of rural education poverty, which are the years of schooling and concerning child attendance. They explained that if there is no “household member completed 5 years of schooling, then it is considered to be in poverty in terms of years of schooling.” In addition, they agreed that “if school-age children are not in school, it is considered this household to be in child attendance poverty.” Ferguson, Bovaird, and Muller (2007) highlighted that the educational outcome has the worse impact from lower family income. Their research was conducted in Canada, one of the richest countries in the world, but still, consider that lower-income contributes to the educational outcome. Though the most current report mentioned that the percentage of poverty in Aceh decreased by 0,89 percent from 15,53 to 14,64 (Dadek. A, 2022), a strong structure of education, which covers the whole layer of social aspect in Aceh, should be designed, because it is the core of the future development of Aceh. Combining the past victory of Aceh and today’s local resources, Aceh has the potential to grow beyond. Fang and Zang (2021) identified the development of education as one of the targeted aspects of poverty reduction in China, which started in 2015.

## 3. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach to obtain the data through document analysis and interviews to support this research. Qualitative research “typically seeks to describe a given setting in its full richness and complexity or to explore reasons that a situation exists (Slavin, 2007)”. Hays and Singh (2012) proposed a foundation of qualitative inquiry which involved five core philosophies of science: Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology,



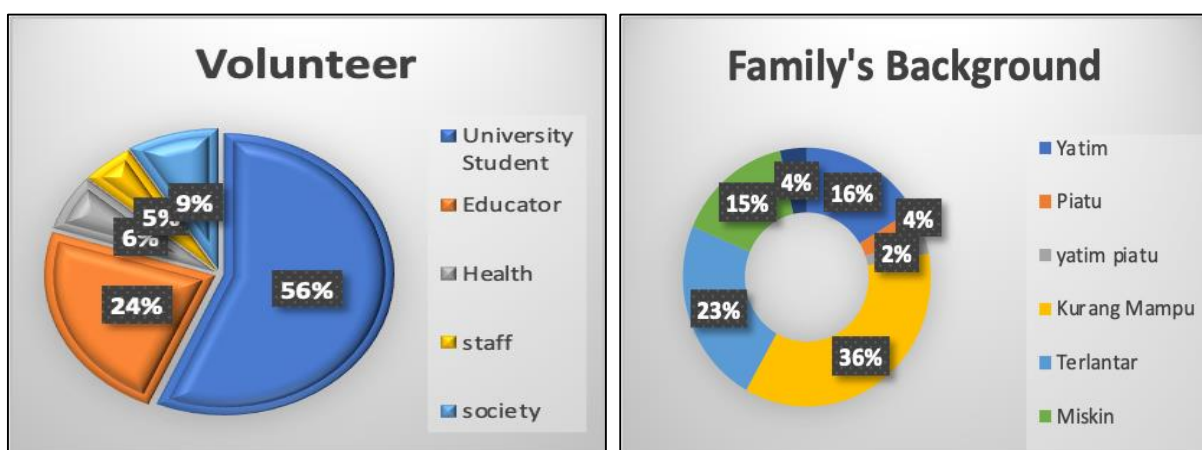
Rhetoric, and Methodology. Philosophical ideas have a huge influence on the practice of the research; however, it remains hidden within the research (Slife & William, 1995; Creswell, 2018). Accordingly, in terms of the epistemology stance of this study, the researchers are following transformative worldview; however, the researchers decide to employ pragmatics approach for the ontological stance. The transformative worldview explores collaboration to advocate social impact on the individual (Cresswell, 2018). Patton (1990; Cresswell, 2018) highlighted that pragmatics is a worldview concerned with works and solutions to problems.

A narrative approach was used in this qualitative inquiry to obtain chronological information from individuals who are involved in the program. This approach helps to describe behaviors, feelings, and motivations (Tracy, 2019). Clandinin and Connelly (2000; Cresswell, 2018) suggested five procedural guidelines for conducting narrative research: 1). Identify a research problem, 2). Selecting research participants, 3). Collecting information about the context, 4). Analyzing the participants' stories and then retold, 5). Collaborating with participants. A narrative approach is powerful in qualitative research as it expressed something which normally unexpressed explicitly (Ford, 2020).

Ten social workers, consisting of two Yakesma staff, four educators, one health staff and three community representatives, and also five family representatives were involved in this research. This purposive sampling was chosen based on the length of provided services, either social workers or educators and the family's representative were chosen based on the impact they received and changes occurred in their family after children were sponsored to access a proper education. The data from this case study research was obtained through a depth open-ended face-to-face interview and document analysis related to the research.

The data analyzing procedures were developed to help formulate findings for the research. The consent form was signed by the participants, to help them understand the overall research procedure, including the interview recording. All recordings were transcribed into the text and manually chronologically coded and highlighted any matched answers to the research questions. Furthermore, the next step of this research procedure was categorizing the axial code into the theme, which is commonly known as thematic analysis. Thematic Analysis is "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

Several changes occurred before concluding the research finding. This change aims to verify the data and to find the strongest support for the research finding.



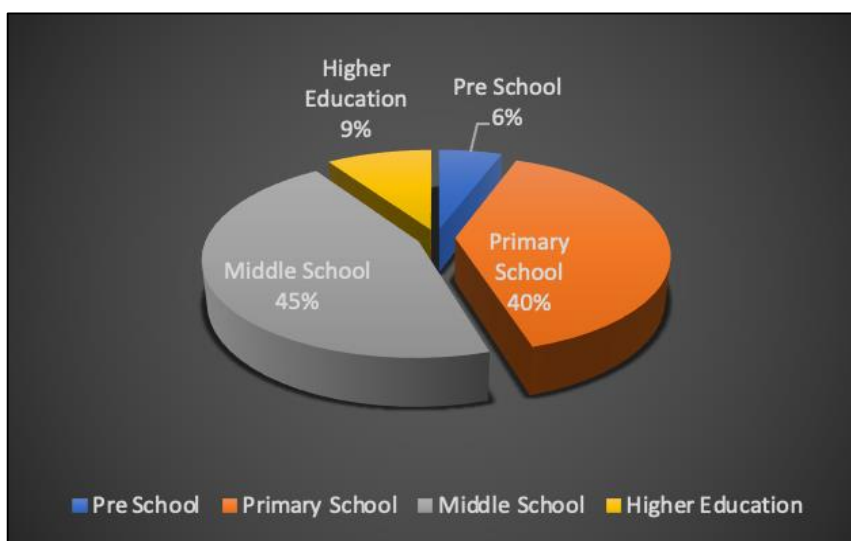
**Figure 3.** Volunteer and family background. (Yakesma's Bank Data 2022)

#### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings How strong is the impact of this social solidarity collaborative action in encouraging and supporting the children, and how does this contribute to the leadership reforms, equal education, and poverty reduction in Aceh, Indonesia? This research has been able to capture several important points from both document analysis and interview, which was conducted to access the impact of social solidarity collaborative action to support vulnerable children and its contribution toward leadership reform among policymakers and provide equal access to education, which is expected leading to poverty reduction.

##### *4.1. Social solidarity collaborative action has widely opened access to vulnerable children from low-income families, beggars, sex, and family abused victims, also disability children to earn a proper education*

The social workers from Aceh welfare foundation notes for a minimum of 86 children are recorded to receive support each year, to continue their formal and non-formal education from various level, starting from preschool, primary school, middle school, and higher education. The data collected from Yakesma shows that 6% of referral children each year are preschool children, 40% are primary school children, 45% are middle school children and 9% are in higher education.



**Figure 4.** Level of education. (Yakesma's Bank Data 2022)

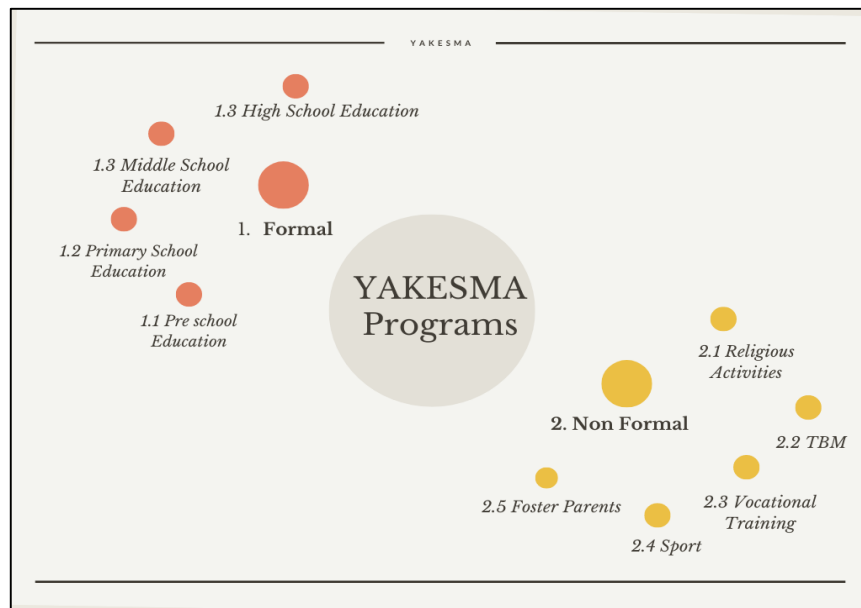
The preschool children are sent to PAUD Ar-Rasyid, a subsidized preschool, which was built within the foundation. A huge car garage building was renovated in 2012 and turned out to be a preschool. The idea of having this preschool within the foundation was to help the orphanage children to reach education at an early age and also to help the local society, who had difficulty accessing preschool after the disaster in 2004. PAUD AR-Rasyid was initiated by volunteers, who received only 150.000 IDR per month or sometimes only received rice from the local farm. It was explained that before the car garage was renovated, PAUD AR-Rasyid utilized any space within the foundation as the classrooms until it was settled down at the car garage till the present time. This preschool currently has 50 students, who are from the local community, and also the referral children who are leaving at the foundation. The

school's principal explained that she charges the tuition fee at a variety of costs, depending on the income of the family. The referral children who are leaving at the foundation has a different amount of tuition fee, she will discuss all the possibilities for these children with the assigned staff and volunteer because she understands that all the cost of these children depends on the sponsor. This preschool also allows low-income families from the neighborhood to attend the school and the school principal will refer them to the foundation volunteer team, to identify the income classification and look for funding support for these children.

The school principal added that 50% of teachers at PAUD Ar-Rasyid are the foundation referral children, who used the opportunity to continue their further education and start working as teachers. It helps the school to maintain this social program and connect to all the volunteers and society. It also helps to develop multiple dimensions of communication, which involve schoolteachers, caregivers, volunteers, funding, and society. The school principal acknowledges a highly effective circle for this social program over the years.

The primary children ages attend the local primary school, out and within the foundation. The six-level of primary school ages children are still attending the public school out of the foundation (orphanage dormitory) area; however, the children ages from level 1 to 5, are attending private schools within the foundation. The idea of having the school internally due to many referral children are having quite complicated issues, such as trafficking, sex abuse, beggar, and disability. The volunteer has no choice but to completely prepare a safe environment for the children, including the school environment. The volunteer mentioned "learning from the entire experiences we had with the children, providing a safe environment is a true medication to help the children psychologically." The growth in the number of referral children was another important reason to have the school within the foundation. The volunteer set up the school in 2020, and brought all the primary school ages children in, except those who are attending levels five and six at the public primary school. The teachers and volunteers are working closely to help the children to have a life balanced, both in education and to fulfil their daily needs.

The middle school ages children are attending the school nearby. Level XII, XIII, and IX age children attend private school, which is about 15 minutes away from the dormitory, and levels X, XI, and XII are attending high school, which is about 25 minutes away from the dormitory. Three wheels bike is medium transportation to take the children to school and one volunteer is in charge to ride them to school. Sharing bikes are also provided as the medium transportation for high school students. Having the children attending the school outside of the foundation area is a huge challenge for the staff and volunteers to control them. Both staff and volunteers are tiredly working to build effective communication with both schools; therefore, they can monitor the student's activities at school, their academic performance, and their behavior. The biggest challenge faced by volunteers and staff is how to cover the children's background when they are out of the foundation area. It takes a huge effort to cope with such an issue.



**Figure 5.** Yakesma's programs; formal and non-formal. (Yakesma's Bank Data 2022)

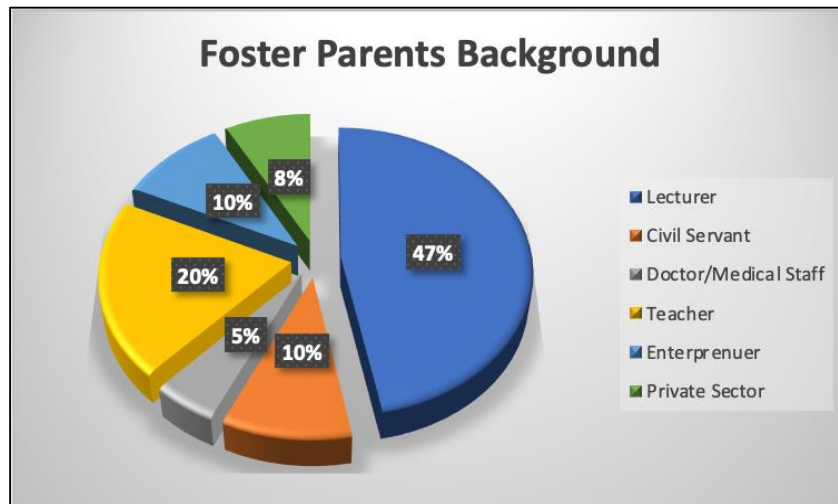
After school hours, all the children will join the Quranic class, sport, and other vocational training with the volunteer at Yakesma. Another facility provided by the volunteer is Taman Bacaan Masyarakat (Community Reading Corner/TBM), which is there to support the children during their leisure time and learning sources for the children who need to wait for the following school year enrolment. In addition to this compulsory education, this program also provides the opportunity for those who graduate from high school to enroll in the university. The foundation will try to channel them with any individual sponsor or government scholarship.

#### *4.2. Social solidarity collaborative action provides financial support through a foster parent development program*

A Foster parent program is developed to get financial support for each of those children, so the social worker and educators are secure with the children's daily needs. This foster parent program is controlled by the social worker, where each of the children receives Rp. 200.000/ month or equal to \$20/month. This financial support is utilized to support education, pocket money, and refreshment, which is planned once a month. This foster parent program is a solidarity awareness developed by the social worker, which engages more people from diverse working backgrounds and cares about social issues, especially the children issue. This foster parent program has widely been familiar to many people, and each of these children is supported by one parent. The social worker will only share the personal data of each child with their foster parent, with mutual understanding to keep the data confidential.

The social worker also prepares a concise list of sponsors' guidance, to develop trust and transparency among social workers, foster parents, and educators. All sponsors or foster parents will receive the monthly financial report through an online application or depending on their request. Each of these foster parents is allowed to meet and greet the children, or take them out, like a real family member, under the control of a social worker. This idea is considered effective to build a strong bond and construct a family support system, especially for those who have been neglected by their parent.

This social solidarity program is a mutual support system and has no legal contract, but all sponsors are committed to supporting the program.



**Figure 6.** Foster parents background. (Yakesma's Bank Data 2022)

The data recorded that 47% of sponsors, who are involved in foster parent program, are university lecturers, 20% is teachers, 10% is civil servants, 10% is entrepreneurs, 8% has a background in the private sector and 5% is a medical doctor or others expertise in health. Some of them have more than one foster child and have funded those children for over 10 years, whereas some others only have one child. All of them are allowed to terminate their support with advance notice, at least three months before the due date, so the volunteers have more chances to find a substitute parent for the kid, and vice versa, if the kid decides not to continue their education, the volunteer inform the parent and the parent are required to wait for another 3 months after the notice before they decide to completely remove the support of transfer to another kid.

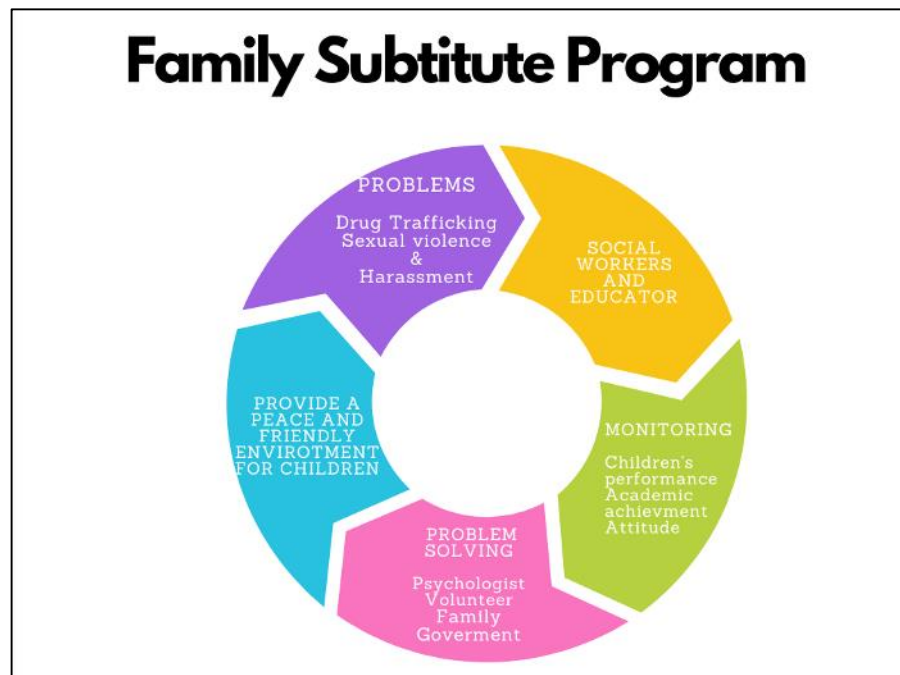
#### *4.3. Social solidarity collaborative program provides a role substitute for parents and government through monitoring and mentorship activities*

Social workers develop a monitoring framework and mentoring ship cycle, a part of the support system to accommodate the children's needs. The aim of having this monitoring framework is to record the cycle development of each child individually, which covers several important components, such as individual performance, interactive communication with teachers and friends, academic achievement, children's attitude, and how responsible they are to all given tasks.

A series of meetings is held to evaluate the finding from monitoring activities, and social workers and educators are discussing any intervention for the children, both are collaborating to decide the best for the children. This collaborative intervention is also trying to bring more sources to help the children have adequate formal and non-formal education, such as psychologists, volunteers, and family or any relative's involvement. The ultimate goal of this collaborative program is to provide a peaceful and friendly environment for children and get benefits from education and be the agent of change for their families.

Foster parents, social workers, and educators are inspiring roles, to bring new hope to the children and play their second role as substitute parents, both in formal and non-formal

children's activities. This collaborative group of people always engage in children's activities, for example, social worker, foster parents, and teachers are attending children's graduation celebration, fasting break during Ramadhan Holly month, Maulid's celebration, and other refreshment activities, such as picnic and others outdoor activities. Though this complete collaborative group is attending the event, those who still have parents, are also invited to join all activities, so they are familiar with the kids' development and expect to learn from and apply it at home.



**Figure 7.** Family' substituted program.

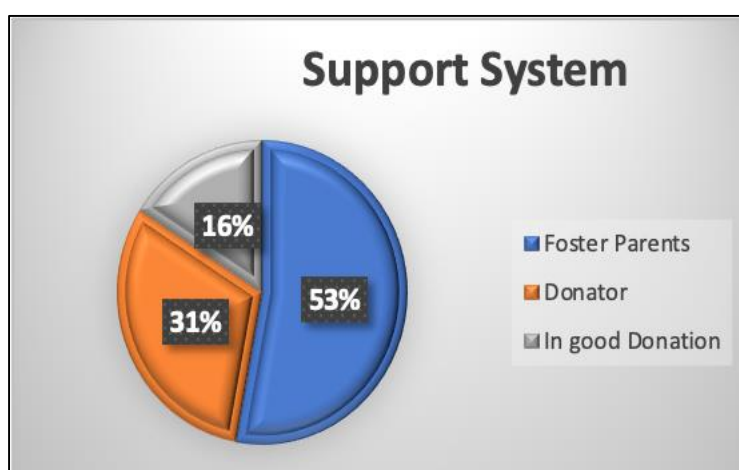
This collaborative program develops such a beautiful system, where everyone can engage to support and provide help for these vulnerable children. All referrals' children will be closely observed by the Yakesma staff and volunteers, to identify the problem, educational background, and other basic data. The children are then sent to the dormitory to join others' children. The caregivers will be informed about those children and how to deal with them but not the detail of the problem. This caregiver is also reminded to communicate with the staff and volunteers if there any reactive attitude showed by the children. The children will be referred to any specific expertise for help, such as a psychologist, medical doctor, family, volunteer, or also government institution. The Yakesma staff and volunteers will monitor the children, find the school, and funding support through the foster parent program. It is not the end of the support; this help circle will be developed through further observation.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This research has found that social solidarity collaborative action has given a positive impact on major vulnerable children referred to as Yakesma. Those children are from a variety of backgrounds, such as orphanages, beggars, sexual or family abuse victims, and lower-income family children. This collaborative program provides more opportunities for the children to earn proper education, both formal and non-formal education. They receive

financial support through the foster parent program, which also provides a substitute role for the parent through monitoring, mentorship, and other additional activities, such as refreshments. This mutual society movement program is designed by considering the need from the grassroots level, followed by the detailed assessment and the absence of government in providing service to the society, especially, the children who are suffering from specific social issues and require certain interventions to solve the problem.

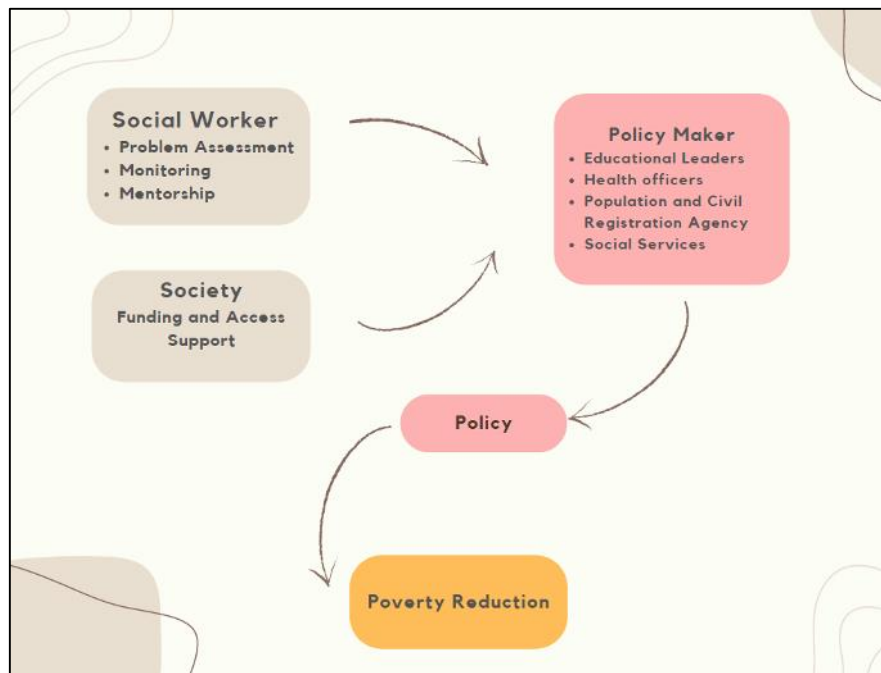
Mutual understanding is built within the program development process, even without a legal contract involved, all the parties are committed to serving the program, and when the foster parents are unable to physically present themselves within the program, a financial and children development report is sent to them.



**Figure 8.** Support System.

This program is considered effective for problem-solving and quick response during this uncertain situation that affects the children and slowly draws a solid impact on the next generation of Aceh. However, for long-life education goals, and strong policy and leadership skills leaders are needed to fight over the issues, and this program is expected to bring a significant impact on leadership reform and poverty reduction. Though the impact is unable to see in a fleeting period, the process of engaging more people from various backgrounds can help to build a role model of society and bring impact the country's development. This model has been introduced from ancient times, through local wisdom, however, it decreased overall struggles experienced by the entire level of society. The persistent financial disadvantages of these struggling families have affected the entire layer of society.

Aceh has a complex issue to be resolved, and it requires a series of actions with strong leadership control, sensitivity, and commitment to set society's needs above individual and group purposes. The raise of social cases in Aceh are equivalent to the poverty increase within society. This issue should be addressed accordingly to find the best solution for the community. This solidarity has begun, which engages the community in problem-solving, to show strong support for the local government. A wonderful opportunity for a positive change.



**Figure 9.** Poverty reduction solutions.

Each affiliate institution within the government is suggested to take a lead to make a significant change, by redefining the policy and budget allocation, so the vulnerable children in Aceh have the opportunity to access education and be the agent of change within their own families and society at large.

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